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NSC BRIEFING

28 October 1953

SABOTAGE THREAT IN TRIESTE

Numerous unconfirmed reports indicate possibility dissatisfied Triestine groups, both pro-Italian and pro-Yugoslav, may soon attempt subvert implementation American-British decision of 8 October by disorders and sabotage in Zone A. This would possibly create a pretext for intervention by Yugoslav and/or Italian troops.

2. Dissatisfied groups most likely to consider such action include:

a. Italian nationalist parties such as the MSI (Italian Social Movement), which fear implementation of 8 October decision might lead to permanent split of Trieste, thus jeopardizing further Italian territorial ambitions

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b. Yugoslav infiltrators and pro-Tito parties which desire to impede implementation of Anglo-American decision, but are bound by Yugoslav government assurance that Yugoslav troops will not fight against British or American occupying forces.

c. Pro-Cominform party of Vidali, which stands for internationalization of Territory, fears withdrawal of Anglo-American forces, and would possibly welcome opportunity to contribute to further chaos in situation.

3. Once begun, disorders might attract support from Independentist groups, which fear economic and political consequences, permanent zonal split and withdrawal Anglo-American forces.

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4. Even poorly organized campaign of disorders and sabotage might snowball due to present tensions and confusion among Triestine residents, and emotionally explosive nature of issue.
5. Capabilities of possible organizers thus difficult to assess, but in view of explosive situation any of them might, at any time, trigger violent disorders:
 - a. MSI and other pro-Italian parties in strong position to create disturbances because of their infiltration of Trieste police. MSI is reportedly collecting arms and organizing action squads for attacks on Slovenes in an effort to incite Yugoslav military intervention and cause clashes between Yugoslavs and Anglo-American occupation forces.

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b. Terrorists from Yugoslavia are reportedly arriving in Trieste in increasing numbers, and there is allegedly a plan to organize partisan battalions in Trieste to blow up bridges, derail trains and destroy main roads in the event that Italian troops enter Zone A. Due to poor control in border areas, Yugoslav-oriented groups doubtless have access to arms.

c. Triestine Communists (pro-Cominform) are well trained in sabotage tactics, and have capability of knocking out industrial installations, public power, and communications facilities.

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